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Estrada visits Station



15th
sergeant
major of the
Marine
Corps talks
with New
River
Marines at
Station
Theater
SEE PAGE 3

'Air Wingers' at SOI



Aviation Marines find success with 'B' billets as combat instructors

SEE PAGE 7

Finding humor in hoops



New River
All-Stars
participate
in shootout
against
Harlem
Rockets at
Fitness
Center
SEE PAGE 18





Command Message

The 2006 "Sounds of Freedom," Marine Corps Air Station New River Air Show will be held May 13 and 14 on the New River flightline.

Scheduled to appear are the Canadian Forces Snowbirds, the United States Army Black Daggers Parachute Team, an AV-8B demonstration, an MV-22, a MAGTF demonstration, The Red Baron's Squadron, Jim Leroy, Juris Kairys, Dale Snodgrass, an A-10 demonstration, Rich's Incredible Pyrotechnics, various flyovers, Tin Sticks of Dynamite, John Curan and a C-123, Larry Kelly and a B-25 and multiple military and civilian static displays.

For more information contact Maj. Michael Wood at 449-5007.

There will be a Valentine's Day Dinner Show at the Officers' Club Feb. 14 at 6 p.m.

Featuring "Love Letters," by Jordan Rhodes and Lynn Moore.

Guests should RSVP by Feb. 10.

Call 449-6409 for more information.

There will be a Texas Hold 'Em Poker Night at the Staff Noncommissioned Officers' Club every third Friday of each month.

The first cards will be dealt at 6:30 p.m. and play ends at midnight.

There are 100 seats available and tickets cost \$20.

Prizes are awarded to those who come in 1st through 5th place.

Community

The II MEF Wounded Warrior Spouses' Support Group meets every third Wednesday of each month.

The meetings start at 6:30 p.m. at the Key Volunteer Center, Building H-14, and are open to all Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, N.C. and Marine Corps Air Station New River families.

For questions or information, call Shannon Maxwell at 347-4450, Becky Klepper at 353-4625 or Allison Starla at 938-1230.

The New River Tax Center is open to provide free tax service to military personnel until April 17.

Visit Building AS-232 or call 449-7400 for more information.

The Kinston 8000: A Run for the River race will take place March 26 at 8:30 a.m.

Marines interested in running the race can call Tim Knobeloch at (252) 939-3336.

Education

The Scholarships for Military Children program applications are available and must be turned in by close of business Feb. 22.

The program is open to unmarried children under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of active duty personnel, Reserve, Guard and retired military.

Applications, eligibility and other information for the 2006 Scholarships for Military Children program are available at http://www.militaryscholar.org or http://www.commissaries.com.

The Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation is looking for students who qualify for academic year 2006-2007 scholarships.

Scholarships range annually from \$500 to \$10,000.

Students qualify if they are the son or daughter of a Marine on active duty or Reserve, son or daughter of a former Marine or Marine Reservist or son or daughter of an active duty, reserve or former U.S. Navy Corpsman who is serving or has served with the Marine Corps.

Graduating high school seniors' application submissions are due by March 1, 2006 and all other students are due by April 15, 2006.

Application forms are available to download from www.mcsf.org.

Religious Info

The Weekly Men's Bible Study Group meets every Thursday morning at 6 a.m., at the Mainside Protestant Chapel Annex behind the Base Chapel.

For more information, contact Chaplain James Dance at 451-3210, Maj. Jo Rozier at 451-7842, Staff Sgt. Stacey Lafferty at 450-8595 or Jim Sides at 451-5024.

In the Corps

Active Duty Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Fund Drive kicks off March 1.

Fund drive representatives have been identified and will begin training soon.

The team of representatives will undergo preseason fund drive practice to ensure they build on last year's success.

Donaters can expect higher visability and more opportunities to give this year with programs like the "Round Up," as well as incentive-based donating.

Those interested in donating before March 1, or have questions about the drive, can contact Capt. Charles Hart at 449-5446.

Recruiting

Earn promotion points for recruiters assistance in the Northeast Region.

Recruiters assistants are needed at Recruiting Stations Albany, N.Y., Buffalo, N.Y., Harrisburg, Pa., New Jersey, New York, N.Y., Pittsburgh, Pa., Portsmouth, N.H., and Springfield, Mass.

For more information applicants are encouraged to please contact 1st MCD at (516) 288-5656.

Marines interested in recruiters assistance in the Colorado, Wyoming, Western Nebraska or Western South Dakota areas should contact Sgt. Maj. Robert Cadle at cadlerg@marines.usmc.mil or call (303) 241-8102.





Kathy Zerba MCAS New River commanding officer's secretary

Hometown: Hopedale, Mass.

Family: Kathy is married to retired Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Kris Zerba, and has two sons: Justin (21) and Terry (16).

Military background: Kathy spent four years in the Navy and got out as a Petty Officer 3rd Class.

Time on Station: Kathy said she has been on Station for 15 months.

Best part of job: Kathy said the best part of the job is working with the current command. She said the commanding officer, executive officer and sergeant major are wonderful to work with and are great Marines.

Best part of working with the military: "Being part of a family," said Kathy. "The military is just great."

Proudest accomplishment: Kathy said her proudest accomplishment has definitely been having and raising her children.

Best advice received: "My mom told me to always have good manners and to use common sense," Kathy explained. **Personal motto:** "Take the time to thank the people who deserve it and never keep all the glory for yourself," Kathy said.

Personal hero: "My personal hero is my good friend Tracy Colburn. She was a stay-at-home mom and spent the last three years of her life battling cancer," Kathy said. "Despite her illness, she never stopped taking care of her family."

Person whose lifestyle you'd like to emulate: "I'm going to say Tracy again," said Kathy. "She was a great person and always did anything she could to help other people and to care for her children."

Roto UE

Commanding Officer
Col. Stephen L. Forand

Executive Officer
Lt. Col. Frank H. Miner

<u>Sergeant Major</u> Sgt. Maj. Lewis Summerville Public Affairs Officer Capt. Stuart J. Fugler

Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Phil Mehringer

<u>Press Chief</u> Lance Cpl. Brandon M. Gale

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News

15th sergeant major of the Marine Corps visits Station

Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White correspondent

The sergeant major of the Marine Corps visited the Station and talked with the top enlisted of Marine Corps Air Station New River on Jan. 24.

Sergeant Maj. John L. Estrada, the 15th sergeant



Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

Major Gen. Robert C. Dickerson (left), Marine Corps Installations East commanding general, and Sgt. Maj. John L. Estrada, 15th sergeant major of the Marine Corps, leave Station Operations after Estrada concluded his visit of the Air Station, Jan. 24. major of the Marine Corps, had lunch with several sergeants major from surrounding squadrons at the Staff Noncommissioned Officers' club.

During his stay, Estrada also addressed current issues that effect the Corps with NCOs and SNCOs at the Station Theater

Some of the topics Estrada discussed were the future of the air wing, the first MV-22 Osprey squadron standing up this March, the condition of the barracks, vehicle deaths and how to handle nonjudicial punishment of Marines returning from the Global War on Terrorism.

"These issues should concern our leaders on doing their part as NCOs and staff NCOs," said Estrada. "Our Marines need that experience and leadership for the future of our Corps."

After talking about Corps-wide issues, Estrada thanked the Marines of New River for all that they do in supporting the infantry units overseas.

"Infantry loves Marine air support," said Estrada.
"With other services, you can't be sure how low they are going to come in to assist, but Marines like to be as close to the action as possible and supporting infantry is what it is all about."

Towards the end of the discussion, Estrada opened the floor for questions from some of the Station's NCOs and SNCOs.

Master Sgt. Kert Lang, Station Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting staff noncommissioned officer-incharge said he enjoyed listening to the sergeant major's views on the involvement of Marines in Iraq because he has similar feelings on the subject.

"It's reassuring to know the sergeant major and myself are thinking on the same level," said Lang.

Before leaving the Theater to conclude his tour of the Station, Estrada closed the event with final words of encouragement to the New River Marines, Sailors and civilian employees.

"Marines are the most respected and revered warfighters in the world," said Estrada. "Everyday, Marines should be able to say that they made a difference in the world and that's something to feel good



Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

Lieutenant Col. Edward M. Jeffries passes a noncommissioned officer's sword to incoming Sgt. Maj. Matthew B. Brookshire, Feb. 3.

ITB welcomes new Sgt. Maj.

Lance Cpl. Randall A. Clinton correspondent

Sergeant Maj. David A. Carter relinquished the duties of Infantry Training Battalion's top enlisted position to Sgt. Maj. Matthew B. Brookshire during a post and relief ceremony at the Camp Geiger Fitness Center Feb. 4.

For the past 18 months, Brookshire held the position of company first sergeant for Company C, ITB. Carter will become the sergeant major for the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

"I'm going to miss dealing with the students. We had a lot of unique problems and unique solutions," said Carter, who also received a Bronze Star at the ceremony.

He says the most exciting part of his job happened every two weeks when another ITB company graduated, sending another group of finely trained infantry Marines to the fleet. Carter oversaw the training of 35 classes of nearly 6,000 Marines.

Carter also said Brookshire's 18 months as first sergeant have prepared him well as he advances to the battalion level.

Brookshire credits the outgoing sergeant major for making the transition easy and looks forward to working with the combat instructors.

"(Carter) made every day on the job easy for us," Brookshire said.

He also said his staff noncommissioned officers and NCOs will be the key to continuing the high level of training at ITB.

Squadron, community come together to award H&HS Marines

Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White correspondent

Marines of Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron were recognized in a ceremonial breakfast by the Station command and businesses from the surrounding area Jan. 24 at the Station Dining Facility.

Sergeant Zhen Zhao, H&HS air traffic control radar watch supervisor, and Cpl. Stephanie I. Martin, H&HS ground electronics maintenance division radar technician, were recognized as Non-Commissioned Officer and Marine of the Year for the squadron.

"Congratulations to both Sgt. Zhao and Cpl. Martin, two truly outstanding Marines," said Lt. Col. Gregory F. Kleine, H&HS commanding officer.

Marines who enter the ATC department will see Sgt. Zhao's name on the wall with several accomplished Marines from that

department and Cpl. Martin's character, confidence and the way she carries herself makes her stand out among other Marines, said Kleine.

The ceremony started with opening remarks from both Kleine and Col. Stephen L. Forand, MCAS New River commanding officer, and the special guest speaker was Sgt. Maj. Lewis L. Summerville, Jr., Station sergeant major.

Colonel Forand thanked the sponsors for supporting the event and the Station and for making the Jacksonville area a Marine friendly community. He also congratulated Sgt. Zhao and Cpl. Martin for their hard work, and the "recognition that they so richly deserve and earned"

"It's always a pleasure to come over to the Air Station for these types of ceremonies," said Bob Jones of Freedom Furniture, one of the nine sponsors of the event. "I'm proud of Sgt. Zhao and Cpl. Martin and I'm proud of what they have done. This is a community that is really together and I will support the Marines and the Marine Corps until I die."

Each of the sponsors presented the two Marines with tokens of appreciation, ranging from Beanie Babies to NCO swords, for their hard work and efforts.

"Words can't express how humble and grateful I am for everything (the community) has done for us and continues to do for us," said Martin.

Though both Marines were thankful for the gifts received, both believe they could have never made it where they were without the help of their NCOs and SNCOs.

"I wouldn't be here without the support of the Marines ahead of me, who motivated me and wouldn't let me settle for the minimum standards," said Martin. "They made me want to strive for more."

"It's an honor to be here and to



Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

Colonel Stephen L. Forand, Station commanding officer, speaks at a Noncommissioned Officer and Marine of the Year Breakfast, Jan. 24.

receive these gifts," added Zhao. "I never thought I'd be the NCO of the Year. It has been a privilege to serve under the leadership of my NCOs and staff NCOs and if it

weren't for those sergeants and corporals who looked out for me when I was a lance corporal, I wouldn't be the Marine I am today."



SOCOM Black Daggers Parachute Team to perform at 'Sounds of Freedom' Air Show

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command Parachute Demonstration Team will grace the Carolina skies during the 2006 "Sounds of Freedom" Air Show on the Station's flightline May 13 and 14.

The team is comprised entirely of volunteers from throughout the Army special operations community.

The members of this elite group have diverse backgrounds

and various military specialties.

The average age is 33 years and the average number of free fall jumps is 560.

The team represents the professionalism and dedication of special operations forces.

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command (Airborne), better know as USASOC, was activated Dec. 1, 1989 at Fort Bragg, N.C. USASOC is the Army component of U.S. Special Operations Command, headquartered at

MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

The mission of USASOC is to deploy fully trained and equipped Army special operations forces worldwide, to conduct special operations across the range of military operations, in support of regional commanders, American ambassadors and other agencies.

As a major Army command, USASOC reports directly to the Department of the Army.

Headquartered at Fort Bragg, N.C., USASOC commands both active Army and Reserve component special operations forces.

It also provides oversight of Army National Guard special operations forces.

Special operations forces have been a part of our military history since the colonial era.



In every conflict since the Revolutionary War, the United States has employed special operations tactics and strategies to exploit an enemy's vulnerabilities. Specially trained soldiers with a remarkable inventory of skills have always carried out these operations.

For almost three-quarters of a century,

small, highly trained groups of soldiers have been inserted behind enemy lines to disrupt the movement of enemy troops and supplies to the front lines.

These brave soldiers have frequently used parachutes as a means to infiltrate without being detected.

Although most of the airborne forces of the world still use round parachutes, some specialized units use the Ram Air Canopy as their primary means of infiltration.

The Black Daggers use the military variant of the Ram Air parachutes, which allows the free fall parachutist the ability to jump with more than 100 pounds of additional equipment attached to him. In addition to the extra weight,

the jumper must also withstand the high winds, frigid tem-

peratures and low oxygen common at high altitude, requiring the jumper to be highly skilled.

When exiting the aircraft, normally from an altitude of 12,500 feet, the jumpers free fall for about two miles at approximately 120 miles per hour.

They fly their bodies to perform maneuvers using their hands, arms, legs and shoulders to control their flight.

The parachutes used by the team are flexible wing gliders.

The Black Daggers mission is to perform live aerial demonstrations in support of U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Community Relations and Recruiting.

Editor's note: Information and photos of the U.S. Army SOCOM "Black Daggers" Parachute Demonstration Team was taken from public.dover.amc.af.mil.



State of the Community Breakfast





ISO audit helps ensure quality

Kimberly Walker NADEP Public Affairs

When Naval Air Depot Cherry Point undergoes its next round of International Organization for Standardization (ISO) audits in May, it will be evaluated under a new aerospace standard-AS9110.

This new standard outlines the quality system requirements under the AS9100:2000 standard and includes additional criteria for aircraft maintenance facilities.

Auditors said the new requirements should help the depot fine tune its quality system.

"AS9110 is made specifically for places like this," said Charlie Harlan, AS9100 auditor for ABS Quality Evaluations, based in Houston, Texas. "It will simplify how you

look at your quality system, and it should offer some excellent opportunities for improvement."

The depot received high marks from its last ISO quality audit, conducted in mid-November by auditors from ABS. Auditors evaluated the depot's compliance with the ISO 9001 quality standard, the OHSAS 18001 Occupational Safety and Health Standard, the AS9100 aerospace standard and the ISO 14001 environmental standard. ABS renewed the depot's ISO 9001 certification for another three years. In addition to the new aerospace standard, auditors also recommended upgrading the environmental standard to ISO 14001:2004.

Auditors noted seven nonconformities, most of which involved document control. Environmental auditor Chris Garth said the depot performed extremely well, considering the scope of the audit.

"You have a lot of things going on, and it's tricky to keep them all in line," he said. "All the auditors mentioned that document control is something you need to work on, again because you have such a big system."

Evaluators said negative findings often represent opportunities for organizations to improve their quality systems. Auditor David Dudley credited depot management with taking a proactive view of audit findings.

"When (a finding) is issued, it is discussed by the management team, and assignments are made," he said.

"They don't look just to correct problems in single areas-they look to correct problems as if they existed through the whole depot.

Using findings like that is a very valuable thing," Dudley added.

ISO Site Lead Bruce Laviolette said the depot can learn a lot from the auditors' experience. "These auditors have a great knowledge base to draw from," he said. "They travel all over the world looking at our competition, and they can walk into our system, understand what's going and apply some of the things they've learned through other organizations.

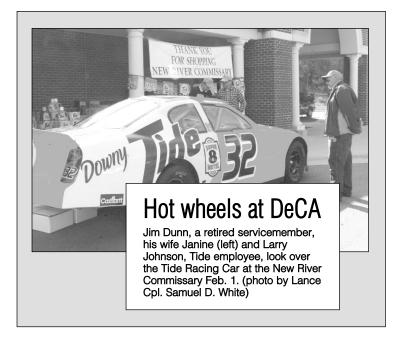
"By nature of their findings, they can bring us a great deal of understanding of our own system and show us places where we can improve," Laviolette explained.

Laviolette said ABS won a recent contract competition, which means the company will remain the depot's ISO auditor for another three years. ABS Quality Evaluations has conducted periodic audits at the depot since 1999.

Auditor Chris Garth said he enjoys visiting the depot because management and employees take the audit process seriously.

"A lot of time (with other organizations) you feel like ISO gets pulled out for us then put back on the shelf, but here I think that it's really happening, that every day people are looking at that stuff," he said. "You're walking the walk."









Aviation Marines forge newest warriors

Lance Cpl. Brandon M. Gale

correspondent

Teaching young Marines the skills necessary to survive in combat is a great responsibility, and two combat instructors with aviation backgrounds are proving they're up to the task

Gunnery Sgt. Samuel G. Leonard, Company E, Marine Combat Training Battalion company gunnery sergeant, and Staff Sgt. Curtis L. Ratliff, 4th platoon, Company E platoon commander, both had military occupational specialties that kept them on flightlines around the world; Leonard as a CH-

53E "Super Stallion" avionics technician and Ratliff as an F-18 "Hornet" eye-level maintenance technician.

When the time came to choose a "B" billet, both men felt they could make an important impact as combat instructors.

"It was more appealing to me," said Ratliff, a native of Flat Rock, Mich. "I couldn't picture myself being a recruiter and I knew a lot of drill instructors from my time in Beaufort (S.C.). After talking to them, I realized being a combat instruc-

tor is the billet that suited me best."

Leonard and Ratliff have been assigned to MCT Bn. for 20 and 22 months respectively, and both have impressed their fellow Marines with their knowledge and leadership abilities.

According to Sgt. John A. instructs a group Wallace, Company E combat instructor, Ratliff's aviation MOS hasn't prevented him from excelling as an

instructor and platoon commander.



Lance Cpl. Brandon M. Gale

Staff Sgt. Curtis L. Ratliff, Company E combat instructor and platoon commander, instructs a group of Marine Combat Training Battalion students Feb. 2.

"He's shown that having an infantry MOS isn't as important here as taking time to learn the skills and then understanding the best way to teach them," Wallace said.

"He's done a great job and I enjoy working with him."

There are unique challenges in transitioning from the flightline to the field, said Leonard.

"The people coming from the air wing have to learn many of the basics all over again," he said.
"This stuff isn't second nature to us like it is to the infantry Marines.
We constantly have to educate ourselves on the changes and updates."

The two men also said they understand the importance of teaching

See **AVIATION** on page 10



ROTO VIEW

What are you going to get your 'sweetheart' for Valentine's Day?



"I'm going to get her a pair of earrings."

Gunnery Sgt. Michael A. Salyers, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26, dynamic component mechanic, Preston, Md.



"He likes Nike Air Jordans, so I think I might look into getting him a pair of those."

Lance Cpl. Deandrea Lane, Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron, Station commanding officer's driver, Jacksonville, N.C.



"I'm not really sure. I'm probably going to write her a poem."

Cpl. Daniel Cruz, School of Infantry, armorer, Chicago, Ill.

AVIATION, from page 7

the MCT curriculum to non-infantry students who could soon be deployed to combat zones around the world.

"With what's going on in the world today, they need to understand that this information is vitally important to keeping themselves and their buddies alive," said Leonard. "They will use these skills in addition to their MOS skills. They can't learn them and forget them because they have real-world relevance now."

"It's a tremendous weight on

our shoulders," added Ratliff. "We can't stress it enough; this might be the last time they get this type of training before they go to Iraq, so we all take it very seriously."

The combat instructor billet can be rewarding for Marines looking to advance their careers, as long as they are prepared for the challenge, said Ratliff.

"It's great for anyone who wants to be a positive influence on young Marines" he said. "It's hard work and long hours, but it's a chance to really give something back. I get to meet the future of the Marine Corps everyday."



Lance Cpl. Brandon M. Gale

Sergeant John A. Wallace, Company E combat instructor, teaches the fundamentals of patrolling to a group of Marine Combat Training Battalion students. Wallace said he believes successful instructors can come from any MOS.



DTS makes travel easy for Station Marines

Lance Cpl. Randall A. Clinton correspondent

Servicemembers and other Department of Defense employees here started using the new online Defense Travel System Feb. 4 for all travel requests, reservations and approvals.

According to the DTS Web site, www.defensetravel.osd.mil, the new system's goal is to provide a seam-

less, paperless, temporary duty travel system that meets the needs of travelers, commanders and process owners

"The biggest gain (in switching to DTS) is the settlement of travel claims. I've had 12 or so claims filed using DTS and none of them took longer than 48 hours for me to get paid," said Chief Warrant Officer Richard S. Eldridge, the Station's lead defense travel administrator.

The system will work on the Legacy Network computers, but servicemembers and DoD civilian employees must know their common access card personal identification number. The PIN is required to submit and approve travel forms, and can be reset by the Pass and ID office here.

"The best part of the new system is how easy it makes travel. You don't have to go anywhere. (It

means) an electronic ticket waiting for them at the airport, a rental car waiting when they get off the plane and lodging reserved and ready," said Eldridge.

For travelers, the benefits of using DTS include less of a wait for reimbursement, easy to create authorization and voucher forms, detailed upfront entitlement computation, and easier and simplified Temporary Duty regulations.



'Raging Bulls' career planner looks to reload for future

Cpl. Micah Snead 2d Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq -- The Raging Bulls of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-261 (Reinforced) are not only supporting the Marine Corps by air, they are reloading it with talent for the future.

Marines from HMM-261 (Rein) are currently deployed as the aviation combat element for the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) at Al Asad, Iraq. With the help of one Marine, the Raging Bulls are reenlisting and recommitting themselves to the Corps during their deployment.

"Being able to be a part of something that makes the world a better place is something that keeps me in," said Sgt. David Lakey Jr., an intelligence specialist and Paw Paw, Mich., native with HMM-261 (Rein). Lakey reenlisted shortly after the squadron arrived at Al Asad. "Since we have the opportunity to make our reenlistment something we can remember, I chose to have it on the base power generator. It is one of the tallest places here, so I was able to see most of the base. Also, having the group of people that I invited to attend made it that much more memorable."

Sergeant Alfred L. Kennard, a Eutaw, Ala., native, oversees career retention for the deployed Raging Bulls. As a career retention specialist, Kennard counsels Marines on their reenlistment options and prepares and advises the commanding officer on all career planning matters. Kennard said he has a special passion for his job that comes from the simple pleasure of helping his fellow Marines.

"I take joy in giving Marines good information," Kennard said.
"The most important part of my job is providing the Marines with all of the facts so they can make an informed decision about staying Marine or transitioning into the civilian world."

The Corps' current role in the

Global War on Terrorism has created a high operational tempo and heavy deployment cycles for many Marines. Kennard said each Marine who chooses to continue their career is making a special sacrifice, especially in a squadron like HMM-261.

The Raging Bulls spent nearly seven months at Al Asad in 2004 and returned in December.

"It is a special thing to see those who are staying Marine at a time like this," Kennard said. "When I reenlist a first term Marine, I feel like I am giving back to the Marine Corps by keeping a proud, strong tradition alive. Seeing a first term Marine transition into a careerist is so special because they know what kind of sacrifice, they are tomorrow's sergeants major, master gunnery sergeants and colonels."

Kennard actually intended to only complete one four year contract before leaving the Corps, but found himself with a new plan after broadening his horizons with the 9th Engineer Support Battalion in Okinawa, Japan.

"I was sure that I was getting out after my first four years," Kennard said. "I even planned to get out because I was not interested in the job I had. Once I spent time as a training noncommissioned officer and learned how much I enjoyed helping Marines, I had second thoughts. When I found out I could become a CRS and do nothing but help Marines, I knew that was what I wanted to do."

Kennard said first term Marines, those who are still on their first service contract, are most likely to have mixed feelings about whether or not they want to reenlist.

"Some enjoy deployments, others want to be closer to home or with their families," Kennard said.
"But, there is room for both if you explore your options. I think every single reenlistment is special. The Marine Corps is very different from what it was four years ago. It is exciting to see how Marines adapt to the new challenges."

14-Feb. 8, 2006
Feature

Feb. 8, 2006-15
Feature

VMMT-204 graduates first Osprey crew chiefs



Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White correspondent

Two years ago, six men made the decision to become United States Marines. The future Marines had little in common, several were still in high school planning for spring break and their schools upcoming prom while others worked odd jobs. Most of them not knowing what an MV-22 was.

Since then, those six men have turned into warriors. They tackled the famous sand fleas of Parris Island or the treacherous hills of San Diego. Each of them earning the title 'United States Marine,' each earning the right to wear the eagle, globe and anchor.

On Jan. 25, through hard work and dedication, these Marines earned another significant emblem - their aircrew wings. These Marines became the first MV-22 crew chief graduating class of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204.

"I never thought I'd be where I am today," said Lance Cpl. Jacob A. Stinson, VMMT-204

crew chief and one of the six graduates. "It's an honor to be one of the first graduates for the Osprey crew chief program."

"Think of all the people you went to high school with, and I don't care if they went off to Harvard or Yale or Brown or are studying to be a brain surgeon, none of them will probably ever have the responsibility that those six Marines will have," said Col. Joel P. Kane, VMMT-204 commanding officer.

"Now, imagine someone saying to you, when you were in high school, you are going to become a crew chief and certify safe for flight the MV-22, an \$80 million aircraft. The amount of money and the number of lives, for a high school or college graduate, is a huge responsibility," added Kane

Certified as one of the first crew chiefs to graduate from VMMT-204 might seem like a lot of pressure to handle, to the newest crew chiefs it's just another day in their life in the Corps.

"Being the first to graduate from the squadron and to be trusted with the Osprey is a lot of responsibility," said Stinson. "I just hope I can live up to it all." The graduation of these Marines is not only a significant event for the Osprey program and the graduates, but also to Marine aviation.

"This is a big deal for us as a squadron. This class is the first that we've put through since we as a squadron have returned to flight last October," said Kane. "We're pretty excited about the graduates making it through our current training program."

A syllabus that took the Marines through a nine-month-long course, the graduates are ready to put their newly acquired skills to the test against the future of the aviation wing, said Kane.

against the future of the aviation wing, said Kane.
"I know all the graduates are going to be successful," said Kane.

Within the next few months, while three of the six Marines will stay with the 'Raptors,' the other half of the graduating class will transition to the future Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-

263, which will of stand up in March.

"I'm eager to get out there and join up with my new squadron," said Lance Cpl. Yauncey A. Long, a future VMM-263 crew chief. "I just hope I don't let the Marines, my leaders or the Corps down"



Lance Cpl. Jacob A. Stinson (left) and Lance Cpl. Yauncey A. Long talk while riding in the back of an MV-22.





(Above) Adorned with their new aircrew wings, the first pipeline graduates of Osprey crew chiefs stand in front of an MV-22 Jan. 25. When VMM-263 stands up March 3, half of the graduates will leave to become a part of the new squadron. (Left) Lance Cpl. Brett B. Wearmouth, VMMT-204 crew chief, shakes hands with Col. Joel P. Kane, VMMT-204 commanding officer.

Lance Cpl. Yauncey A. Long, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204 crew chief and one of the six newest graduates, inspects an MV-22 Osprey. Long completed a nine month long training course to become one of the first VMMT-204 Osprey crew chiefs.



2nd Recon in for a smooth landing

Cpl. Mike Escobar 2nd Marine Division

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. -- The gray storm clouds loomed ominously over a barren, muddy field riddled with puddles of stagnant rainwater, as light gusts of wind buffeted the assembled troops.

The previous day's foul weather and the promise of more to come soon, however, were not reasons enough for the Marines of 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion to put their training on hold during the early morning hours Jan. 30. Quite the opposite, several of them boldly ascended into the clouds to keep their parachute jump qualifications current.

The day's training began at 5:30 a.m., with the Marines assembled in the battalion's paraloft receiving a brief on 2nd Recon's newest parachute, the SF10-A. This parachute replaced their older model, the MT11, and features a slower rate

of descent and improved maneuverability.

According to Sgt. Shawn Thompkins, 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion's paraloft's noncommissioned officer-in-charge, the Marines must complete a total of three jumps with the SF10-A to be considered "transitioned" over to this new parachute.

Two of them must be "slick" jumps, meaning jumping out of an aircraft with no gear but a main and reserve parachute, the 30-year-old Pensacola, Fla. native continued. The third time around, however, personnel must leap out with a rucksack weighing at least 45 pounds.

After Thompkins delivered his brief informing the Marines and corpsmen of these requirements, jumpmasters oversaw the troops conducting parachute landing fall (PLF) drills. The Marines and Sailors practiced landing on the balls of their feet,

then letting their body weight fall gently onto their calf, thigh muscle, buttocks and pushup muscles

"These drills are done to make sure they're executing their falls correctly," Thompkins explained as the recon personnel demonstrated proper landing techniques in a sandbox outside the paraloft. "It minimizes the risk of injury during the real training if we can correct (improper) techniques ahead of time out here."

After several tumbles in the dirt, the troops loaded their parachutes into the back of a truck and headed out to nearby Drop Zone Plover to kick off the actual training. As they helped each other don their parachutes, they conducted last-minute inspections to check for rips or tears in their gear, along with any loose straps that might have become entangled in flight.

Afterward, the recon personnel boarded a CH-46E helicopter in groups and circled the DZ from overhead for several minutes before hurtling out into the wind

This was the part recon infantrymen like Cpl. Stephen Ellsworth had been eagerly awaiting since early morning

"It's one of the best rushes you can ever feel," the 20-year-old Largo, Fla. native stated. "This was my eighth jump today, but I still get a little nervous at first. As soon as I'm about to jump out, though, I'm like, 'Hell yeah, this is going to be fun.' I think we're all crazy, but I'd do this every day if I could."

The 2004 Indian Rocks Christian High School graduate added that the SF10-A parachute did indeed offer smoother landing and better features than its predecessor.

"You can move around in the air more to kind of pinpoint where you want to land," Ellsworth continued. "You hit the deck a lot softer, and the landing in general is just more smooth."



Cpl. Mike Escobar

Corporal Stephen Ellsworth, an infantryman with 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, has his parachuting gear adjusted by a fellow Marine at Drop Zone Plover here to prepare for his jump training evolution.

Today, the goal was to get as many Marines and Sailors in the battalion familiar with this parachute model, said Capt. Mark Raney, Headquarters and Service Company commander. During subsequent training evolutions, the troops will keep their jump qualifications current by doing such training approximately every six months, he added.

Refining skills such as these is vital for a reconnaissance unit to accomplish its mission, as the infantrymen must often be inserted behind enemy lines or in remote regions via airdrop to gather intelligence and scout out a region. As a fit and specially trained force, Raney said that 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion's troops remain ready to continue training to support whatever missions today's high-operational tempo demands of them.



Cpl. Mike Escb

A Marine with 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion prepares to jump out of a 'Black Knight' helicopter onto Drop Zone Plover.



Cpl. Mike Escobar

A Marine with 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion observes as fellow Marines land onto Drop Zone Plover here Jan. 30 after parachuting out of a Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-264 CH-46E. Several of the battalion's Marines and Sailors practiced jumping out of a helicopter while wearing the SF10-A parachute, a model that replaced the older MT11 and features superior maneuverability along with a slower rate of descent.



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Roto VUE

Semper Fitness

Importance of cardiovascular exercise



Lynda F. Itro MCCS personal trainer

Cardio-respiratory endurance is very important because of its relationship to the prevention and control of heart disease. Evidence is growing more

rapidly that consistant cardiovascular activity produces positive changes in your level of aerobic fitness. Aerobic exercises are exercises that produce positive physiological changes on the heart and lungs.

Regular exercise such as speed walking and running cause the heart muscle to become stronger.

People who participate in cardiovascular activity have increased energy levels, improved muscular endurance and handle stress better. It is also vital to control and maintain a desirable weight.

Marines who don't consistently participate in cardiovascular exercises will have more problems maintaining and meeting physical fitness test scores. It is very important that you train all year round. Coming to see a trainer a week before your PFT will not improve your scores. Cardio fitness takes time to build upon. It takes the body an average of six to 12 weeks to adapt to the demands of an exercise program.

The Marine Corps needs fit Marines because being overweight can lead you to become high risk for heart disease, diabetes and a weakened immune system. It is up to the Marine to participate in a physical activity program on his or her own time. If you find that it is hard to develop or maintain a program, come see the Semper Fit trainers. We are here to help you improve and succeed.

Cardiovascular exercise should be done three to five days a week, if not six. You should do cardio activity no less than 20 minutes, but you can do up to 60 minutes. Cardio vascular exercises include running, swimming, walking and bike riding.

The rate in which you progress will depend on your age, health status and current level of fitness.

If you are looking to further your fitness accomplishments or simply need some extra workout ideas, please remember the Personal Training staff aboard Marine Corps Air Station New River is a free service to all active duty personnel, their spouses and dependents (be aware of age limits in facilities). Trainers all hold different hours at each facility to better accommodate individual needs. Please feel free to call building AS-4000 at 449-5854 or AS-204 at 449-5267 and make your appointment.

Soaring like Rockets



Dwayne "Swoop" Simpson, a Harlem Rocket and former Southern Connecticut State University player, dunks a basketball during a game at the New River Fitness Center on Jan. 27.

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

correspondent

Families from throughout the area packed the stands at the New River Fitness Center Jan. 27 to watch the Harlem Rockets take on the New River All-Stars in a basketball spectacle full of high flying dunks, ankle breaking ball control and side-splitting comedy.

The New River All-Stars, made up of several Marines from Station squadrons, opened the game by taking first blood with a quick, short-ranged shot, but struggled to keep up with the nationally-known Rockets from then on.

The Harlem Rockets, made up of highly talented former college and professional players, have been thrilling fans for years with their unique combination of basketball skills, zany comedy and audience participation.

Though the New River All-Stars played a competitive match, the Rockets walked away with the big win at the end of the night.



A New River All-Star player puts on a pair of wings to help him "fly."





(Above) Corporal Jeremy J. Rykard, New River point guard, sets up a play against Kenny "Krazy Hands" Rodriguez. (Left) A New River Marine stretches out to dunk a basketball.



Maintenance Marines keep 'Griffins' flying

Cpl. James D. Hamel 2d Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq -- Despite harsh conditions and a frantic work pace, the "Flying Griffins" of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-266 have kept the CH-46 at the tip of the spear in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During an average month at their home base, Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., the Griffins fly approximately 225 hours per month.

But the demands of war have forced the

squadron to average nearly four times that amount. The squadron flew 880 hours during December 2005, and the pace of operations for the CH-46 squadron deployed to Al Asad, Iraq, should remain high until the unit returns to the United States. What they're proudest of, however, is that they've spent all that time in the air without a single downed aircraft.

"It's all the maintenance Marines," said Sgt. Thomas Rawls, a Freeland, Pa., native, and flightline mechanic. "If they didn't do what they do, the pilots couldn't do what they do. Maintenance is absolutely essential."

Nicknamed the "Phrog" because of its

appearance, the CH-46 helicopter is one of the oldest active aircraft in the U.S. military. Marine Corps pilots have flown it since 1962. Many of HMM-266's helicopters are more than 45 years old, and Rawls said keeping them in flying condition is a full-time job.

"These are older aircraft, and all the wear and tear over the years makes the maintenance pretty intensive," he said. "Keeping these things in the air is a nonstop process."

The maintainers in the squadron call their job "turning wrenches." But their work is far more complicated than that phrase implies, evidenced by the eight separate departments dedi-

cated to maintaining the aircraft.

"We've flown 3,500 flight hours, and it requires 13 (hours of maintenance work) to fly a single hour, so we've been busy," said Master Sgt. James Francis, the chief of maintenance control.

Francis, a Jacksonville, N.C., native, said the maintenance process has many steps. The pilot and crew chiefs report any problems they encounter during flight. Each maintenance department reviews the problem to understand and then fix it. Additionally, the helicopters undergo preventative inspections for every 25, 30, 50 and 100 hours they fly.

"Unfortunately, through trial and error, we've found that without doing these inspections we're putting the helicopter and passengers at risk," he said. "We do everything to prevent a catastrophic accident."

Knowing the lives of their fellow Marines depend on them inspires the maintainers to do the best job.

"We love our jobs," said Sgt. Larry Edinger, a Beaufort, N.C., native and flightline mechanic with HMM-266. "We look at that bird nose to tail to make sure everything is ready. We know that with us looking at (the helicopter) before flight, it's going to come back safely."

The flightline mechanics are the last line of defense against problems. They perform daily inspections to ensure each aircraft is ready for the air. They have checklists to guide them through each phase of inspections, but Edinger said they always look at more than what is required by the checklist, just to be safe.

"We don't just wing it, the process is very systematic," said Gunnery Sgt. David Leonard, a flightline mechanic. "We're flying a lot of hours every month, so it's intense, but we get it done."

Francis said a more recent challenge in maintaining the aircraft is dealing with the weather. The squadron has dealt with newer maintenance challenges as the Iraqi climate has become more volatile.

"With the weather, it's a constant battle back and forth," he said. "The temperature change is so dramatic from day to night that the hydraulics are constantly expanding and shrinking."

But, Francis said he and the maintenance Marines with the "Flying Griffins" are up to the challenge, and the statistics agree. The Flying Griffins have flown nearly 1,800 missions, delivering 12,100 passengers and 600,000 pounds of cargo since they arrived in Iraq.

"We do four months of flying in a month," he said. "The Marines who work here are good, and they know their jobs. They can troubleshoot almost anything, and out here, they do."

RotoVUE

Ten Commandments of Return and Reunion



Lt. David E. Rozanek Marine Aircraft Group-26

In the past few weeks, many of New River's Marines and Sailors have returned from deployment and in the near future many more will return.

In preparation for their

return, the chaplains offer Return and Reunion briefs. As a result, the chaplains have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the Marines as to the content of the reunion briefs. We call it the Ten Commandments of Return and Reunion.

I. Thou Shalt Expect Thy Homecoming to be Stressful.

Stress is a reaction to change and even positive change can be stressful.

Both sides idealize what the reunion will be like, which often causes disappointment. Out of hardship and separation come unrealistic expectations.

Men dream about driving their car or motorcycle, eating home cooked meals, spending time with the kids and of course sex! While she's dreaming about you fixing everything that has broken. Neither of you are likely to live up to the other's expectations.

II. Thou Shalt Enjoy being an Invited Guest in Thy Own Home.

Your spouse and children have learned to manage without you.

Your spouse has learned to be more independent running the household as a single parent.

You may feel threatened by your spouse's newfound independence and you may feel unwanted in your own home. Realize that both of you have grown and changed personally, in order to survive the deployment.

Allow your family to continue functioning as they have been while you were deployed. Take things slowly and make changes even more slowly.

Your family has been planning for your return for a long time, be patient, act like a guest and let them celebrate your return the way they have planned for it.

III. Thou Shalt Not Criticize Thy Spouse Upon Thy Return.

Your spouse has done the best job they could. Your job is to provide praise, encouragement and thanks.

Don't get caught up in the "Who Had It Worse Game."

If your children are still alive, your spouse has done a great job!

If you look for ways your spouse could have done better, you'll soon be looking for a marriage counselor.

Your spouse held your family together and deserves your thanks.

IV. Thou Shalt Change Whether You Want to or Not

Change is an inevitable fact of life and it's good.

Deployment and "Return and Reunion" takes both husband and wife out of their comfort zones

It takes energy to adjust to change even if it's a positive change.

Things will never be the same as they were before the deployment, you have both changed in positive ways in order to survive the separation. Your lives will be different.

V. Thou Shalt Spend Quality Time with Thy Children.

Children equate love with time. The more time you spend with them, the more they'll feel loved by you. Spend time with your children as a group and individually. Each child has a tremendous need to feel special to their parents. Children idolize their parents, you are a hero to them

Children become unruly during times of change. Let your spouse continue to be the primary disciplinarian and gradually share this role over time.

Don't let your child's first memory of your return be one where you're spanking them. They'll remember that for the rest of their lives. Tell your children that you love them and back it up with time spent with them and affection.

VI. Thou Shalt not Treat Thy Spouse Like a

One-Night-Stand

Both of you have been looking forward to this reunion for a long time, treat each other with love, consideration and tenderness.

Intimacy is a wonderful thing, treat your spouse with respect, compassion and kindness. Kindness and respect go a long way toward rekindling romance.

VII. Thou Shalt Compromise Thy Social Activities for the first Few Weeks.

You've made new friends during the deployment and you'll want to spend some time with them afterwards, but don't neglect spending time alone with your family.

Resist the urge to spend the first few weeks home engaged in social events that leave you exhausted and unable to spend time with your spouse and children.

VIII. Thou Shalt Watch Thy Money.

Some of you've become rich on deployment and now you face the temptation of celebrating your reunion by going on a spending spree.

Expensive new toys for you and your children will quickly leave you 'busted' and angry.

Avoid overspending, buy only what you

If you charge more to your credit card than you can pay off in a month, over time the interest will make it just like buying the item twice.

IX. Thou Shalt Confess to a Chaplain.

Some of you may have sins that you need to confess.

See a Chaplain before you confess to your spouse everything that you did on deployment.

If you feel guilty and need to confess your sins, go see a chaplain, civilian clergy or counselor first, then we can meet with your spouse together.

X. Thou Shalt Give Thy Time, Talent, and Treasures to Thy Family.

During deployments many households maintain separate bank accounts to manage the finances, which can be a good idea. Don't try to change things too quickly.

It may take months before family finances begin to flow smoothly again.

Safety Snippets:

Child-Safety Car Seats

Four out of five childsafety car seats are used incorrectly. Here's how to make sure your kids are fully protected and that you are buckling them up correctly.

1. Infants should ride in rear-facing seats as long as possible.

·Never put a rear-facing seat in a front seat that is equipped with a passenger air bag.

·Recline the seat so the child's head can rest flat against the shell.

·Route the harness straps in the harness slots that are at or slightly below shoulder level.

2. For kids over one year old and who weigh between 20 and 40 pounds, it's time for a front-facing child-safety seat.

·Fasten the harness clip at armpit level.

·Route the harness straps in the harness slots at or slightly above shoulder level.

·Keep harness traps snug and flat.

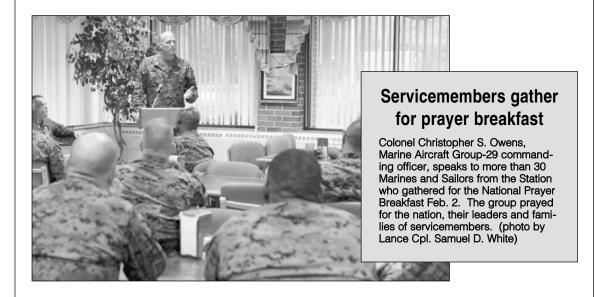
·Keep the seat upright.

3. Kids over 40 pounds can use booster seats.

·These seats position the installed lap belt over the child's hips and upper thighs, and the shoulder belt across the chest and shoulder.

·If you car has a back seat that is lower than the child's ears, you need to get a high-back-style booster seat to protect the child's neck.

- **4.** The back seat is usually the safest place for a child to ride.
- 5. Most child-safety seats manufactured after September 1999 come with a tether strap, which must in turn be attached to a tether anchor. See your car owner's manual and contact the company that made your car for more information.
- **6.** Be sure to send in your child-safety-seat registration, so that you can be notified if the seat is recalled.



Sunday Services

Catholic 9 a.m.

Protestant

11 a.m.

For more information call the Memorial Chapel at 449-6801

Giant Valentine carries messages of love



Jennifer Moore contributor

This Valentine's Day, a few groups are teaming up to send a massive message of love

to service members overseas.

The program – dubbed Operation: Love Our Troops – aims to set a new world record by creating the largest digital Valentine's Day card ever.

Supporters can log on to the Valentine at www.operationloveourtroops.org to leave a message of love or support for a specific servicemember or servicemembers in general.

Library of Life – an organization that offers permanent Web sites for a one-time fee – and Soldiers' Angels – a network of more than 80,000 volunteers who send care packages and support to servicemembers and wounded warriors – have teamed up for the Valentine's Day effort.

Ana-Marie Smith, president of Soldiers' Angels, said she hopes Operation: Love Our Troops will remind the public there are many servicemembers still deployed abroad.

"I just want to keep it in the public eye. During times of war and times of peace," Sailors and Marines will serve overseas, she said.

Smith is the daughter of a Sailor and said she sends out numerous letters to "any Sailor, any Soldier or any Marine."

"The responses are always so positive," she said, with service-members saying it is nice to know someone cares.

"I want to bring awareness to the public," Smith said.

Soldiers' Angels is one of many military support groups which allows members of the public to "adopt" a servicemember and send letters and care packages to that servicemember while he or she is deployed.

The group is based in Pasadena, Calif., and began in 2003 when Patti Patton-Bader, great grandniece of Gen. George Patton had a son stationed in Iraq.

She realized her care packages could not support his entire company, and sought out volunteers to help her send support and love to the men and women serving the United States.

Library of Life contacted Soldiers' Angels about the Valentine's Day effort, and Smith said she liked the idea "of having another way of letting our military know that they are not forgotten."

During the holiday season, many people call Soldiers' Angels and other organizations, offering support to deployed troops.

"Then, after the holidays, all this great help kind of wanes down," she said. "We always strive to keep that awareness up."

The digital Valentine held more than 7,000 messages by Monday and will continue to grow. Supporters can write a message of any length or record a voice message by telephone.

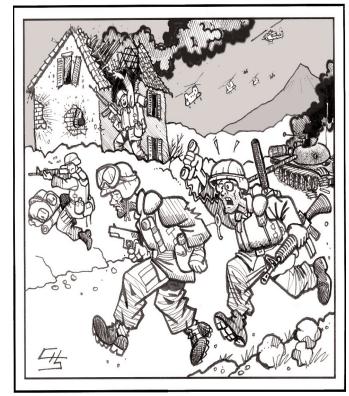
Servicemembers can visit the Web site to see the messages, and Library of Life will send messages addressed to specific servicemembers Feb. 14.

Library of Life and Soldiers' Angels are non-profit organizations.

For more information about Operation: Love Our Troops, visit www.operationloveourtroops.org.

FEATHERNECK

CRAIG H. STREETER



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Station Theater Movies

Feb. 8 - Feb. 22

Wed. Feb. 8	9 a.m.	Pride and Prejudice	R
Fri. Feb. 10	7 p.m. 7 p.m. 9:30 p.m.	Derailed Cheaper by the Dozen Pride and Prejudice	R 2 PG R
Sat. Feb. 11	9.30 p.m. 7 p.m. 9:30 p.m.	Cheaper by the Dozen Pride and Prejudice	
Sun. Feb. 12	3 p.m. 6 p.m.	Cheaper by the Dozen Syriana	
Mon. Feb. 13 Wed. Feb. 15	7 p.m. 9 a.m.	Syriana Fun with Dick	R
	7 p.m.	and Jane Fun with Dick	PG-13
Fri. Feb. 17	7 p.m.	and Jane King Kong	PG-13 PG-13
Sat. Feb. 18 Sun. Feb. 19	7 p.m. 3 p.m.	King Kong Fun with Dick	PG-13
oun. Fob. 10	6 p.m.	and Jane Memoirs of a Geisha	PG-13 PG-13
Mon. Feb. 20 Wed. Feb. 22	2 p.m. 9 a.m.	King Kong Memoirs of a Geisha	PG-13 PG-13
WEU. FED. ZZ	9 a.iii. 7 p.m.	Memoirs of a Geisha	PG-13



The theater snack bar opens 30 minutes before the first movie and closes 45 minutes after the last movie begins. Movies and times are subject to change.

For more information, call the Station
Theater at
449-6292 or 449-6528.



A \$1 admission fee is charged for ages seven and above.